

News for Immediate Release

Date: September 20, 2018

For more information contact: Gina Hardin, Coordinator, Des Moines County Emergency Management Agency at 753-8206 or Rich Kinney, Chair, Tri-State StormReady Advisory Board at 563-386-3976.

Des Moines County StormReady Recognized Through 2021

Burlington, Iowa. The National Weather Service recently notified the Des Moines County Emergency Management Agency that its *StormReady* recognition has been renewed for another three years. The NWS originally recognized the county in July of 2006 and due to the county's continuous efforts the NWS has extended the recognition until 2021.

According to Rich Kinney, Chairperson of the Tri-State *StormReady* Advisory Board, "Achieving and maintaining StormReady recognition is a significant accomplishment, and demonstrates a long-term commitment to preparing for all kinds of severe weather and saving lives, both locally and as a part of the complete warning process. The numerous improvements since the original recognition demonstrate your exceptional commitment to the safety of residents, visitors, and neighbors of Des Moines County. In particular, the Des Moines County SKYWARN group has become a cornerstone of the community-NWS partnership during severe weather and one of the top programs of its kind in the region".

The Des Moines County SKYWARN team was started in 2005 to better be able to share local real-time weather information with the National Weather Service (NWS) office in Davenport. The team is composed of 35 individuals who volunteer their time, energy, and their own personal equipment and resources to the county by storm spotting during potential and actual tornado and severe thunderstorm events that may impact the county and surrounding areas.

The team most recently moved to a new, secured operations center next to DESCOM. In coordination with DESCOM (Des Moines County Communication Center/9-1-1 call center), county volunteer fire department personnel and amateur radio operators, they are able to provide up-to-date situation reports to the NWS regarding what the weather conditions are here within

our area. These real-time reports are then used by the NWS in their weather reporting products to warn others in the path of the storm of the severe weather threat.

Angela Moore, Volunteer Coordinator with the Des Moines County Emergency Management Agency (EMA), who manages the SKYWARN organization said, “We are one of 44 other counties within the state of Iowa to receive this recognition. We could not have received and maintain this recognition without the dedicated volunteers that we have who go above and beyond the call of duty when severe weather threatens the county.”

The organization is looking for new volunteers to join the team. Basic weather spotter training will be held late winter next year in preparation for the 2019 storm season and is required annually for team members. Individuals interested in finding out more about the Des Moines County SKYWARN organization can reach Angela at 319-753-8206, Ext 6 or check out the EMA webpage at <http://www.dmccounty.com/ema> .

The NWS has opportunities for organizations, businesses, facilities, and local government entities who are actively engaged in weather safety and preparedness to become StormReady Supporters. Those that are interested in this prospect are urged to contact their local Emergency Management Agency office or the National Weather Service office in Davenport.

StormReady is a program aimed at arming America's communities with the communication and safety skills necessary to save lives and protect property. With 98% of all Presidentially declared disasters being weather related, leading to around 500 deaths per year and nearly \$15 billion in damage, this program was designed to help American's communities guard against the ravages of severe weather. *StormReady* communities are better prepared to save lives from the onslaught of severe weather through advanced planning, education and awareness. No community is storm proof, but *StormReady* can help communities save lives. For more information on the StormReady or StormReady Supports program visit <http://www.weather.gov.stormready/>